

Message Text

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11

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

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R 222138Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3018

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DEPT PASS TO AFL-CIO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CI, PINT, ELAB

SUBJECT: INFORMATION ON TEXTILE AND GARMENT WORKER ORGANIZATION

REF: STATE 76035

1. WE ESTIMATE 60-65 THOUSAND TEXTILE WORKERS IN CHILE, VIRTUALLY ALL OF WHOM ARE ORGANIZED. MOST OF THE UNIONS ARE NOMINALLY STILL AFFILIATED TO THE NATIONAL TEXTILE (WORKERS) FEDERATION - FENETEX, WHICH IS STILL CONTROLLED BY COMBINATION OF SOCIALIST PARTY (PS) AND COMMUNIST PARTY (PC) (BOTH ABOLISHED SEPT. 1973) LEADRS. SINCE SEPT. 1973 FENETEX HAS BECOME LESS ACTIVE AND EXERCISED DECREASING DEGREE OF CONTROL OR INFLUENCE. CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY LEADERS RECEIVED SLIGHTLY LESS THAN 25 PERCENT VOTE IN LAST ELECTION (EARLY 1973). LATTER PARTY HAS UNDOUBTEDLY INCREASED INFLUENCE SINCE SEPT. 1973, BUT SINCE NO ELECTIONS HAVE BEEN PERMITTED SINCE THAT DATE, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE EXTENT OF INCREASE. APPROXIMATELY 55 PERCENT OF TOTAL ORGANIZED ARE LOCATED IN SANTIAGO OR ENVIRONS, ABOUT 25 PERCENT NEAR CONCEPCION, WITH REMAINDER SCATTERED ABOUT COUNTRY CENTERS SUCH AS VALPARAISO AND ARICA.

2. NUMBER OF GARMENT WORKERS ORGANIZED WOULD NOT EXCEED 25 THOUSAND, MOSTLY NEAR SANTIAGO IN SMALL ENTERPRISES EMPLOYING LESS THAN 200 EACH. CONTRACT PRACTICES

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WHERE FAMILIES WORK STRICTLY ON PIECE WORK FORM OF COMPENSA-

TION IS WIDESPREAD, AND GENERALLY THESE WORKERS UNORGANIZED.
POLITICAL AFFILIATIONS OF GARMENT WORKERS ARE MUCH MORE DIFFI-
CULT TO DETERMINE BECAUSE OF FRAGMENTATION OF UNIONS, BUT WE
ESTIMATE DISTRIBUTION IS NOT FAR FROM THAT GIVEN FOR
TEXTILES. PC AND PS TOGETHER CERTAINLY EXERCISED STRONGEST
INFLUENCE PRIOR TO SEPT. 1973.
POPPER

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED AFL-CIO.

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